

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image pickup apparatus comprising:

an image pickup section which photographs an image
and outputs its image information;

5 a recording section which stores the image
information from the image pickup section;

a communicating section which transmits the image
information from the image pickup section to an
external unit;

10 a determining section which determines which the
image information from the image pickup section is
stored in the recording section or stored in the
external unit through the communicating section as a
dispersion processing; and

15 a control section which, when the determining
section determines that the image information should be
stored in the external unit, transmits a request signal
for the dispersion processing to the external unit
through the communicating section and if an acceptance
20 signal about the dispersion processing is received from
the external unit, have the image information
transmitted to the external unit.

2. The image pickup apparatus according to
claim 1, wherein the external unit which the control
25 section intends to have the image information stored in
is other image pickup apparatus for photographing
images.

3. The image pickup apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control section, when transmitting the image information to the external unit, generates and stores a list indicating that the image information is dispersed.

4. The image pickup apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control section, when transmitting the image information to the external unit, generates and stores a list information indicating that the image information is dispersed and containing at least one of identification information about the image information and identification information about the external unit which is a dispersion destination of the image information.

5. The image pickup apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control section, when transmitting the image information to the external unit, attaches at least one of identification information about the image information and identification information about the external unit which is the dispersion destination of the image information to the image information as a header for transmission.

6. The image pickup apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control section, when receiving a request signal for the dispersion processing from other image pickup apparatus, stores transmitted image information in the recording section.

7. The image pickup apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the control section, when receiving a request signal for the dispersion processing from other image pickup apparatus, determines whether or not the image information can be stored in the recording section and if it is determined that the image information can be stored, transmit an acceptance signal about the dispersion processing to the other image pickup apparatus and further stores the transmitted image information in the recording section.

8. The image pickup apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control section, when receiving a read-out request signal about the image information from other unit through the communicating section, retrieves list information about the dispersion processing and if image information which should be read out is found, so controls to collect the image information from an external unit of the dispersion destination and transmit to the other unit.

9. The image pickup apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control section, when receiving a read-out request signal for the image information from other unit, retrieves identification information about the image information corresponding to the request signal from identification information of image information in list information about the dispersion processing executed before and if such identification

information is found, so controls to collect the image information according to identification information about the external unit and transmit to the other unit.

10. The image pickup apparatus according to
5 claim 1, wherein the control section, when receiving a request signal for collection of image information stored in the recording section through the dispersion processing from other image pickup apparatus through the communicating section, reads out a corresponding
10 image information from the recording section and transmits to the other image pickup apparatus.

11. An information processing method for an image pick device having a recording section which records photographed image and a communicating section which
15 transmits/receives an image, the method comprising:

photographing an image and outputting image information;

determining which the photographed image information should be stored in the recording section
20 or an external unit through the communicating section as a dispersion processing;

when it is determined that the image information is to be stored in the external unit, transmitting a request signal for the dispersion processing to the
25 external unit through the communicating section; and

when an acceptance signal about the dispersion processing is received from the external unit, so

controlling to transmit the image information to the external unit.

12. The information processing method according to claim 11, wherein the external unit in which the image information is to be stored is other image pickup apparatus which photographs an image.

13. The information processing method according to claim 11, wherein, when the image information is transmitted to the external unit, list information indicating that the image information is dispersed is generated and stored under the control.

14. The information processing method according to claim 11, wherein, when the image information is transmitted to the external unit, a list information indicating that the image information is dispersed and containing at least one of identification information about the image information and identification information about the external unit which is a dispersion destination of the image information is generated and stored under the control.

15. The information processing method according to claim 11, wherein, when the image information is transmitted to the external unit, at least one of identification information about the image information and identification information about the external unit which is the dispersion destination of the image information is attached to the image information as

a header for transmission.

16. The information processing method according to claim 11, wherein, when a request signal for the dispersion processing is received from other image pickup apparatus, transmitted image information is stored in the recording section under the control.

17. The information processing method according to claim 11 wherein, when a request signal for the dispersion processing is received from other image pickup apparatus, whether or not the image information can be stored in the recording section is determined and if it is determined that the image information can be stored, an acceptance signal about the dispersion processing is transmitted to the other image pickup apparatus and further the transmitted image information is stored in the recording section.

18. The information processing method according to claim 11, wherein, when a read-out request signal about the image information is received from other unit is retrieved, list information about the dispersion processing through the communicating section and if image information which should be read out is found, it is so controlled to collect the image information from an external unit of the dispersion destination and transmit to the other unit.

19. The information processing method according to claim 11, wherein, when a read-out request signal for

the image information is received from other unit,
identification information about the image information
corresponding to the request signal is retrieved from
identification information of image information in list
5 information about the dispersion processing executed
before and if such identification information is found,
it is controlled to collect the image information
according to identification information about the
external unit and transmit to the other unit.

10 20. The information processing method according to
claim 11, wherein, when a request signal for collection
of image information stored in the recording section
through the dispersion processing is received from
other image pickup apparatus, a corresponding image
15 information is read out from the recording section and
transmitted to the other image pickup apparatus.